

NC MLK, Jr. Commission Meeting Minutes
August 28, 2018, 10:00 am
YMCA Office, 801 Corporate Center Drive, Suite 200
Raleigh, NC

Present: Commissioners James White, Emanuel Ealy, Elton Futrell, Carol Goins, Immanuel Jarvis and Ann Huggins.

Absent: Commissioners Anitra Bailey, Lucy Dinner, Kenneth Freeman, Dumas Harshaw, Jacquie Jeffers, Larry Jones, Anthony Posey and Phillip Smith.

Guests: N.C. Department of Administration Deputy Secretary Christy Agner, Admin. Asst. Cindy Olsen, Grant Writer Melissa Dunston, and Paralegal Shanon Gerger.

Roll Call and Call to Order - Meeting was called to order by Chairman James White at 10:10 am. Roll call was taken and the Conflict of Interest and Ethics statement were read. An invocation was offered by Commissioner Jarvis.

Old Business – Chairman James White began the commission meeting with the following questions. Who are our strategic partners? What other organizations would be important – of likeminded missions? Who are some natural partners to begin connecting in our shared mission? Commissioners provided recommendations and offered that each Commissioner can take leadership on outreach in different areas around the State. Commissioner Jarvis shared positive conversation with the Founder of “Spectacular Magazine”, after the last MLK, Jr. Commission meeting and would follow up for potential awareness opportunities. Commissioner Ealy offered to liaison with the Black Political Caucus. Commissioner Huggins suggested a letter be prepared by Chairman White and sent to the NAACP State Chapter for distribution to county chapters, as well as letters to faith-based groups. The letter would inform them about what the MLK, Jr. Commission does and request involvement in awareness. Commissioner Goins shared important role of various Greek organizations. Other groups identified included Jack and Jill programs, Poor People’s campaign, National Congress of Negro Women, NC Chamber of Commerce etc. Chairman White stated these suggestions are all great and he will work on a draft letter written to send out. Commissioner Ealy shared a request to receive formal and consistent information that can be distributed to partners hosting MLK events. Staff indicated there is a printing budget and they will investigate the suggested format of informational bookmarks.

Chairman White shared a black and white picture on the screen and asked if anyone knew who the people pictured were and what they were doing. Chairman White stated, the photo reflects what Dr. King did -strategic planning. Since the last MLK, Jr. meeting in April inclusion, diversity and equity have become open topics for community conversation. Commissioner White stated there are groups of leaders, i.e. the NC Museum of Science’s Race Exhibit that people who are saying it’s the best one they’ve been to.

Commissioner White identified one of our major objectives would be to work some consistency to help people to understand the MLK, Jr. Commission. Commissioner White added we need written information and a social media presence. Commissioner Jarvis pointed out the challenges of a website with limited formatting options. Deputy Secretary Agner shared conversation with IT staff, who have created a Boards and Commission site to enhance traffic. Commissioner White asked does this mean our best strategy is marketing? Committee discussed social media options and decided to create Facebook account for the next meeting.

Commissioner Jarvis shared young people are using Snap Chat and Twitter, however, we need to get to the parents of the young people. Commissioner Huggins pointed out most youth groups have parent support who can receive and filter down information. Commissioner White stated one big challenge is just being known and deciding what method we want to use to get the information out there. We can develop a letter. Commissioner Futrell pointed out you can go where the people are attending events, or ride in a parade carrying an MLK, Jr. Commission sign.

Commissioner White asked if there is a way to capture stories across the state of people who attended events with Dr. King. How can we begin in our region to find people who have personal stories of Dr. King? Commissioner Goins stated most of the colleges have student who may be willing to help with this project. Commissioners discussed persons that would be ideal to interview for oral history recording and that time was critical as age of desired interviewees is a factor. UNCTV was identified as an ideal partner. Program Developer Travis Mitchell was identified for outreach

Deputy Secretary Agner asked if there was input into the submission for the 2019 MLK Day of Service proclamation. She suggested a decision be made on how the Commission might want to issue an invitation to the community and county leaders in 2019. A write up on the history of the bell ringing could be included. Last year's bell ringing was part of the State Employees' MLK, Jr. Holiday Observance Program. It was live streamed on UNC-TV and the feedback was very strong. The NC State Employees' MLK, Jr. Planning Committee will begin making plans for 2019 after Labor Day. This Commission can decide if they want to be part of the program in 2019 or have your own event. Commissioner Huggins shared she was honored to be a part of the Bell Ringing last year. She's glad the MLK, Jr. Commission will be meeting in November this year so that we can get the information out early so groups can participate. Some groups did not know about the Bell Ringing Ceremony last year. Commissioner Ealy requested we seek UNC-TV to be a part of the program again in 2019. Deputy Secretary Agner shared the plan for the MLK, Jr. Observance Program for 2019 will be held at Commissioner Dr. Dumas Harshaw's church and it will start with the Bell Ringing. The event will be held at noon on Friday, January 18, 2019.

Commissioner Jarvis shared that he believes it's important for the commission to be there. He added we also need to decide if we want to do something on our own as well. Commissioner Futrell asked if there could be a reading and has done some research on why Coretta Scott King decided to do the Bell Ringing. It's important to let people know the significance of ringing the bell. Chairman White asked are we going to do a separate program and what would be the idea of how we can help communicate the message?

Commissioner Futrell shared he would like to see all 100 NC counties ring the bell at one time, perhaps in 2020 and volunteered to serve on a committee to plan. Commissioners discussed strategies to engage media for awareness of the opportunity. Commissioners additionally discussed timelines of proclamations and how to engage county commissioners to adopt local proclamations.

Lunch Break

Chairman White started the meeting by sharing a photo of Julian Bond in college. He asked, what do you notice? He added, the movement was a conventional movement. Chairman White stated they (in the picture) all played a significant role. The work we do will have an impact.

New Business – Chairman White asked the Commissioners if any of them had a chance to visit any of the MLK, Jr. grant recipient programs we funded? He shared reflections from visiting grantee "My

Brother's Keeper" in the summer. Chairman White pointed out he observed a wide variety and diverse group of students having a conversation about how they were treated in school. This allowed him an opportunity to share with the students about the Civil Rights Act and about Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Chairman White stated this experience made him excited about what our commission is doing with grants.

Staff reports: Deputy Secretary Agner reported, the General Assembly did not reduce the MLK, Jr. Commissions budget. Shanon Gerger, DOA Paralegal, introduced herself and stated she has been working with Deputy Secretary Agner to review the contractual side of the MLK, Jr. grant application for this year. Melissa Dunston, DOA Grant Writer introduced herself and stated her job involves looking for grants and revenue streams that can be used by DOA. She stated she has a lot of experience with schools.

Review of 2017-2018 Grant Program Reports and Discussion of 2018-19 MLK Grant Program –

Discussion included how to measure effectiveness, getting feedback from the grantees, come up with uniform follow up and what the theme should be for this year. Theme ideas were: bullying, inclusion, non-violence, peer pressure, tolerance, civil discourse, justice, diversity and equality. Civil discourse was the chosen theme. It was suggested that the commission bring in some ministers to talk about conflict resolution to give students the skills needed to resolve conflict. Commissioner Jarvis recommended an organization called "Better Angels". They are phenomenal and teach how to change the dynamic of resolving conflict. It is typically a one-day event. Commissioner Goins added it sounds like they also teach people how to listen. Commissioner Jarvis shared they also teach how conflict resolution and civil discourse pair together.

Discussion continued with talking about what amount of money the commission will expend on the grant awards, so the grantee knows what they are eligible to receive. Chairman White recounted the feedback to keep current criteria, utilize a subcommittee to score the applications and allow a maximum of \$1,000 for each grantee. Commissioner Bailey has volunteered to serve on the Subcommittee. Commissioner White stated the deadline for the letter is a couple of weeks. Commissioner Jarvis recapped 4 action items from this meeting – try to participate in events, create an official letter, reach out to social media and wear your MLK, Jr. Commission badge to events you attend.

Meeting adjourned.